

FOOTPRINTS

*THE NEWSLETTER OF THE HOWARD COUNTY STRIDERS
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The Howard County Striders running club is an incorporated non-profit organization dedicated to promoting lifetime fitness through running. An active member of the community, the Striders is one of the largest, most involved clubs in the mid-Atlantic area. We sponsor or support many types of activities, including high quality race events, group runs at least three times a week, weekly series runs, and many activities to promote youth running in the community.



Run Through the Grapevine – November 8, 2020

FROM THE EDITOR

Michelle Pelszynski, managing editor, newsletter@striders.net

Cover Photo: From Run Through the Grapevine in November, the first in-person Striders event since March. From top left: A beautiful day at Linganore Vineyard for a 10k; Our incredible volunteers; Female winner Julia Roman-Duval (33:39); Male winner Jeffrey Wedding (29:50).



Though we made it through 2020, we are only 2 weeks into the coveted 2021 and it already hasn't quite lived up to its very HIGH expectations. The truth is I have re-written this letter several times. Each passing day, sometimes hour, my outlook alters. I am sure many, if not all of our readership can relate. We are flopping back and forth between moments of joy (re: the vaccine) and dread (re: our political state). Life isn't back to normal and the mental health of our Striders is of the utmost importance.

There's little I can do to alleviate the challenges we are all facing, but what I can do is offer some words of hope. If you are reading this newsletter, you are:

- Still focusing on **your health**, even if you have taken some time off from running;
- Open to **being inspired** by your fellow runners;
- Able to carve out some **time to read**, one of 2020's greatest gifts to many of us as everything else was cancelled;
- **Staying connected** to our incredible Striders Community!

After seeing and hearing so many stories of perseverance and resiliency through an extremely challenging year, my wish for all of us is that we find more of what brings us joy! Maybe that's not running for right now, and that's ok.

"We runners pride ourselves on our perseverance. We see things through despite pain and fatigue. Usually sticking it out is the right choice—those negative feelings are almost always temporary sensations along the road to meeting our goals. Getting past those bad patches makes our accomplishments that much sweeter." -Meb Keflezighi from "26 Marathons"

The stories here are just a small representation of the strength and perseverance of our Striders! From conquering long distances to virtual races to actually looking forward to running in Maryland humidity to winning an FKT (fastest known time), our community is just as inspiring as ever! I encourage all of you to share your stories, goals, plans, and hopes for 2021 and beyond. Please send them in to Newsletter@striders.net and feel free to include photos. If there's ever a time we need to come together, it is now!

Stay healthy, and be kind - to others and, more importantly, yourself!

Michelle P.

Next issue of FOOTPRINTS is scheduled for April 2021. Til then, breathe deep and run light.

HOW TO SET GOALS YOU'LL ACTUALLY ACHIEVE

Submitted by Amanda Loudin, Times Magazine, 1/4/21. Reprinted with permission of author.

Whether you want to run a marathon, eat more healthfully or just get off the couch a little more, “for the majority of people, setting a goal is one of the most useful behavior change mechanisms for enhancing performance,” says Frank Smoll, professor of psychology at the University of Washington. “It’s highly individual,” he says—there’s no one way to achieve a goal. But these goal-setting strategies will help you stay the course.

Pick a specific, realistic goal

People often start setting goals with a little too much gusto, trying to overhaul many aspects of their life at once. But that can quickly become overwhelming and backfire. “It’s better to have a systematic approach and identify the one or two that are the most important,” Smoll says.

Making your goal specific can help you follow through on it; [research](#) suggests that narrowly defining a goal helps you clarify the tasks necessary for reaching it. “You should define your goal discretely enough to measure and use it effectively,” Smoll says.

It should also be realistic, says Zander Fryer, founder of the coaching company [High Impact Coaching](#). He’s a fan of the Goldilocks-sized goal. “If it’s too big, it will scare you off; too small, and it won’t motivate you,” he says. “Each individual must figure out the goal that gets them moving.” To stay accountable, give yourself a timeline that you can achieve, recommends Fryer. “That will motivate you to take action.”

Create a plan of attack

Whenever you set one goal, you should actually set two: a process goal and product goal, Smoll says. Aiming for a 4.0 grade-point average would be a product goal: the ultimate objective. A process goal would outline the steps it takes to get there. While the product goal gets all the attention, the process goal is equally vital.

Write down a plan for how you’ll go about achieving your end goal, identifying specific strategies. If a hockey player wants to get 5% faster, for instance, “a productive achievement strategy could include skating additional 10 sprints after practice each day,” Smoll says.

Jason Bahamundi, who has completed eight Ironman races and 30 ultramarathons, sets a process goal before every race. “I think a lot about the training, the timing and the cost of what I’m undertaking,” he says. “If I can think about the challenge and then work backwards, I’m successful.”

Be accountable to yourself and others

Setting the goal is the fun part. Sticking to it is tougher. “You will hit barriers and fears,” Fryer says, so accountability is important, especially at the beginning. “Having a mentor, a partner or social accountability will help when you reach a sticking point.”

Fryer recommends choosing someone who you don’t want to disappoint, paying for a mentor or accountability partner or finding someone with similar objectives through a professional or social

media group. This person can help by defining clear expectations, focusing on performance and monitoring progress.

Honing your patience will be helpful as well. “Remind yourself that achieving a goal takes persistence, drive and resilience,” Fryer says. “Set your expectations that it will be harder and take longer than you expect.”

That means recognizing when you might need to stop and catch your breath. Bahamundi knows how to guard against mental fatigue by building breaks into his process, particularly when he’s preparing for long events. “I train hard for three weeks at a time and then take a full recovery week,” he says. Cycling through work and rest can help you avoid burnout in any endeavor, whether you’re aiming to lose weight, improve a relationship or launch a big career change.

Find joy in the process

Savoring how it feels to chase your goal is useful for maintaining motivation long term, says Brad Stulberg, a performance coach and co-founder of the [Growth Equation](#). “Most people cycle through three stages: the grind of putting your head down and doing the work, anger and fear of failure, and enjoyment,” he says. But finding joy in showing up for the work is essential throughout the whole process and shouldn’t be left for the end. “Before you take on a goal, visualize the process and how it makes you feel,” Stulberg says. “If you become tight and constricted, it’s probably not the right goal or time. If you feel open and curious, that’s a good sign.”

The process won’t uplift you all the time, so it’s important to mark the little achievements en route to the big prize. “As you make progress along the way, celebrate each of the smaller steps,” says Smoll. “I like the saying ‘Yard by yard is hard, but inch by inch, it’s a cinch.’ Self validation is very motivating.”

When you do reach the finish line, you might just find that the process—not the product—was the real prize. “I know that every day I’m out there working is putting me in a better position to be successful on race day,” Bahamundi says. “The race is my celebratory lap for all the hard work I’ve put in.”

TALES FROM THE TRAILS

Submitted by Pattie Laun

We had chosen Saturday, December 5th, for our virtual Dirty German 50k Trail Race. Many routes were studied, we were looking for somewhat flat. The actual Dirty German is fairly flat, running in the City of Philadelphia in Pennypack Park. It's a wonderful race put on by Uberendurance, and I had been looking forward to upping my game from 2019's 25k. Then...COVID. Cancelled races. New dates, then those cancelled and turning virtual.

So we were now in a virtual 50k, and we had until the end of 2020 to complete it. Since most of the flat trails around here were only on road, we looked elsewhere. But driving an hour or two to get to a flat route, then to have to drive home after running 31 miles just seemed like a bad idea. Let's see what we can toggle together here in our own backyard.

I used AllTrails Pro to create two maps, one of our first 25k, then the other with the second 25k, with our cars at the starting point at the Woodstock Inn at the crossroads Woodstock Road and the Patapsco River. Those cars were our only aid station, and we had procured permission from the Inn to allow us to park there all day.



*Just before we started our 50k.
(From left: Sandy, Pattie, Mark, Heather)*

Then...the weather! As we watched the weather reports all week, Saturday was looking BAD. Not just bad, but horrible. Torrential rain was forecasted. Gheesh! But the four of us, Heather, Sandy, Mark, and I, were available on Friday, and that day had a much more promising outlook. OK, Friday it is.

We met at 7:00 am at the Woodstock Inn, planning to run the first half towards Daniels Dam, up to Hollifield, down the new Dogwood Trail that links both sides of the river together, and down the Alberton Road trails back to Woodstock Road. We tied on our shoes, put on our vests, and took some pictures, then...

It started sprinkling. OK, a little bit of wet wasn't going to hurt us. After an hour or two, however, the rain was really starting to muddy things up. Wait a minute...today was supposed to be dry until those torrential rains were starting later in the afternoon. What?

Rain, rain, and more rain. Mud, mud, and more mud. With the muddy conditions, the unrelenting wetness, and a short-ish detour (ok, I got us lost), we finally made it back to the cars. It was cold, it was wet, and we were only half-way done. Some of us changed shoes and shirts, we ate some food, then started up the next trail for a 15.5 mile out-and-back.

This part of the route went towards Sykesville from the Woodstock Inn on the fairly newly constructed trail, the WoodMarr Trail. It would take us to Marriottsville Road to the Marriottsville Trail, where we would run until the half-way mark, then turn around.

And, it was still raining. And, there was even more mud! There was mud so sticky it held on to your shoes and pulled you downhill. I call that diarrhea mud (new technical term) – and it really fit the conditions! We were tired of running, hiking, standing upright.

But most of all we were tired of mud. We did quite a bit of hike/running after the turn-around point, in part due to the fact that I had done something to my ankle, and running was extremely painful, especially those last, I don't know, 8 miles or so! Tendons do that when you go jumping from mud pit to mud pit to avoid puddles as big as the Chesapeake Bay!



Did I tell you it was muddy?

So there we were, running at least 2 hours longer than we had expected, and it was getting dark. Yes, we were in the mud, in the dark, with no headlamps. We had expected to be done well before 3pm. Oopsie!

Mark, ever the Boy Scout Leader, told us to let our eyes adjust to the dark, then we'd be able to see pretty well. That worked until it got really dark for me. Mud + roots + rocks + cliffs downhill to the railroad track in the dark weren't my idea of fun!! Heather and I each pulled out our trustee iPhone lights and got on with it. Mark and Sandy, who each must have had Super Eyes, just kept on in the dark.

But finally, up ahead we saw tiny lights! It was the Woodstock Inn! I was never so happy to see that little restaurant in my life. We made it! And it was "only" 5:15pm. Thank goodness this virtual race didn't really have a cutoff.

Time to warm up, but first, a little celebrating! Sandy brought a bottle of champagne, and we toasted our wet, muddy selves, took some more pictures, and got ready to go. Sitting down on the car seat felt sooooo good!



*Finally done...now for champagne, and home!
From Left: Sandy, Pattie, Mark, Heather*

We had short distances to drive home, but we had tons of memories to make this day "quite an adventure!"

And I learned to never, ever rely on weather forecasts to change your running plans...Saturday was a gorgeous day, sunny and beautiful! Oh well.

FAREWELL TO 2020 VIRTUAL RUN TO TIMES SQUARE

Submitted by Phil Lang



With COVID restrictions back in play, another virtual challenge event to get us from Thanksgiving to New Years Eve was accepted by many. Using the event as a way to say "Farewell to 2020," we supported each other in running the 202.0 miles from Feet First in Columbia to Times Square in New York City.

It was open to individuals who wanted to run about 40 miles a week or more for 5 weeks or to teams of people with the same goal or that wanted to crank out as many miles as possible. We logged our miles daily and watched the total of miles on the events bar graph grow as we virtually ran to New York City with the goal of completing the 202.0 miles by New Years Eve to virtually be in Times Square to watch the ball drop. Each participant received a bright orange beanie to keep their ears warm and to keep them visible in these short Winter days plus a special discount on shoes and apparel at Feet First during the last week of the year. Thanks to all for participating and running their way into the new year! Here's to health and happiness for everyone in 2021!



Phil and Vicki Lang traveled to NYC to the finish line for a photo in the Big Apple!

FKT OR FASTEST KNOWN TIME ON THE ROCK CREEK TRAIL

Submitted by Kelly Campasino

Once I realized I wouldn't be racing this year I wondered if there was another way I could challenge myself without traveling amid this pandemic. I had been losing motivation from running the same routes over and over without a goal. I had learned about FKTs on social media but I thought they were all extremely long routes in faraway places that were completed only by professionals. Not entirely so! After visiting the website I learned that there are several routes in Maryland of relatively short distance.

I chose the Rock Creek Trail route which is ~32 miles from Derwood, MD to the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC. This route starts off in grass, then becomes wooded trail with rolling hills until around mile 9 where you exit Rock Creek Regional park. Then you follow an asphalt path until the route joins Rock Creek Regional Park where you follow the Western Ridge trail for about 5 miles. The last 5 miles are once again on the paved Rock Creek trail. The paved sections in combination with the net downhill really make this a fast route.



Looking at the weather the day before, I was uncertain whether it was even a good idea to make the attempt. Heavy rains were predicted during my planned run time. Although I had enjoyed my training runs along this route, it was still a sinking feeling to realize that my preparation might be derailed by bad weather conditions. I decided to go for it to take advantage of my fitness and shifted my start time up several hours. Now I was also racing against the rain.

Conditions started in the low 40s with mostly cloudy skies. Fall is my favorite running season, and I enjoyed the forested scenery as the miles quickly ticked by. A light rain started with 15 miles to go and quickly turned into moderate rainfall with gusty winds. My pace slowed significantly in Rock Creek park (now the Western Ridge trail) as I expected, but it was nice to have a bit of protection from the wind and rain. I also enjoyed the colorful (although squishy) carpet of leaves. The last stretch of the Western Ridge Trail right before the route turns back into the Rock Creek trail splits into two options: strenuous or moderate. I went the strenuous route which is pretty technical. There are large masses of tangled roots and jagged rocks with a steep drop off into Rock Creek on the left side. I mostly walked this section and used my hands a fair bit for balance to avoid slipping on the wet leaves and roots. Once you hit the pavement again (now Rock Creek trail) it's only 5 miles to the finish! I did my best to make up time after the slower 5 miles through Rock Creek park. Another runner had commented that the run around the reflecting pool is deceptively long and I agree! The route takes you to the back left side of the Memorial, but it is then another mile around the

reflecting pool. To top it all off, you have to run up the 3 flights of stairs and enter the Memorial to finish the course. I was pleasantly surprised when I looked at my watch and saw that I had beaten my goal of 4:30. At this point I was so wet and cold that I quickly made my way to the ride waiting for me on the side of the Memorial.

I really enjoyed training for this FKT and I have my sights set on a few more FKTs in MD this winter.

MIRACLE AT THE 2014 JFK 50-MILER

Submitted by John A. Wheatland



God is good! On Saturday, November 22, 2014 Eric Katkow and I completed our 13th JFK 50 Mile Race. This will always be a special JFK 50 because for the first time I did not know whether I could really finish it the required 14 hours.

My running during 2014 had gone really well, so I felt well prepared for this long run. On Thursday, November 14, I caught a cold. I thought I would be able to get over it before I had to do the JFK, but I did not. Although I had gone through the worst of the cold, some of it still lingered in my head and chest on November 22.

We started the JFK at 5:00am, as we normally do, with a 3 mile hike up to South Mountain where we get on the Appalachian Trail. We rolled along well, except for the numerous bathroom breaks that we had to make. Eric and I had the same problem at Baltimore Marathon in October where we made 4 pit stops each (must be a byproduct of getting older). We got to the top of Weverton Cliffs at a time of 4.5 hours into the race. We proceeded to the bottom of the cliff (15.4 miles) on the switchbacks and arrive on the C&O trail at time of 5 hours.

On the C&O, we started to execute our normal plan of running 5 minutes and walking 2 minutes. After the first run, I could hardly breathe. My cold, together with my exercise induced asthma (COPD) had started to close my wind pipe. We tried to do the 5-2 routine again, but I could not do it. After trying different time combinations, we finally arrived a 1.5 minute run followed by a 2 minute walk. My throat was closing up after a minute and half of running. Our progress was real slow and for the first time ever we did not know if we could make it. It was at this time that we noticed a women wearing number 1417 (Faye Hawn) walking just in front of us. We pondered whether she was planning to walk the entire way. We ran to catch up to her and started a conversation. Faye told us that she always walked the JFK and was planning to finish in a time of 13 to 13.5 hours. We decided to walk and follow Faye, but we could not keep up with her. I have never seen anyone walk so fast; she was really moving. Eric and I had to run every so often just to stay close to her and keep her in sight.

At this point, we were at mile 24 and figured out that if we could walk 15 minute miles for the next 6.5 hours we may make it. It was a plan, but was it realistic? So many things could happen. I encouraged Eric to leave me as there was no reason why he should not finish on time. After a few minutes of arguing, he reluctantly left. I started walking in earnest, hoping I was walking fast

enough and determined to not stop until I made it or was pulled for not making one of the cutoffs. Every minute counts.

The first few hours went well, and I sustained my pace. It was during this time that I noticed this really sharp pain in the middle of my left sole. It felt as if a piece of glass or a sharp rock had penetrated my shoe and was sticking me. At 4pm, I got to the 38.4 mile aid station and as I was showing my number to one of the officials, she frantically waved to me to hurry up and pass her. I had made that cutoff by less than one minute. I thanked God. She told me the next aid station was 3.4 miles away and the cutoff was 5pm. I stopped at the aid station, stuffed my pocket with something to eat and drank half a cup of coke or Gatorade. I had figured out that if I did not drink too much, I would not have to make as many pit stops. Pit stops were a real issue because every minute counts. I was wearing a pair of tights that had a draw string that I had to re-tie. My hands swell when I run very long distances and with my fat fingers I was having trouble tying the draw string quickly. Every minute counts.

When I had gotten to the 38.4 mile aid station and had someone look at the bottom of my shoe, but they did not see anything. I left the station and went a few hundred yards, but I was in so much pain I stopped to remove my left shoe and check for myself. With my fat fingers, this was not a trivial task, since I had to half way remove one of my gators. I didn't find anything and could not detect a blister (but I had one). I put my shoe back on and continued on my way. With only 3.4 miles to cover the next hour, I was tempted to slow down a little, but decided not to. Every minute counts.

Off to the 41.8 mile aid station. I told myself to ignore my foot pain and keep pushing. I got to this last aid station on the C&O, turned on my head lamp and put on a reflective vest (everyone who finishes in the dark is required to wear a vest so drivers can see you). I left that aid station feeling pretty good about my effort. I now had a 10 minute cushion and was feeling well.

The next 8 miles to the finish are really hilly. My plan was to walk up the hills and run down the hills and flats (if I could). As I turned left to go up the first hill, I noticed my right shoe was untied. There was a low stone wall at that point so I used it to retie my shoe with my fat fingers. As I stood up, I almost blacked out and fell. Previously I had been warned about bending over after a long run; now I know what they were talking about. I struggled to the top of a very steep hill and started to execute my plan. I had the good fortune to carry a couple DayQuils with me and took them at the last aid station. I think they allowed me to run the down hills and flats. I made good time and was actually picking up a minute per mile.

When I got to 6 miles from the end of the race I had an hour and a half left to finish. For the first time since mile 26, I was sure I could complete the race by the 14 hour deadline. I continued making



good progress with the exception of an additional pit stop, which I calculated I could afford (I learned how to retie my draw string with my fat fingers while walking). I had no problems finishing. I walked across the finish line with a time of 13:56:53 with just over 3 minutes to spare. I was the next to last finisher. When I crossed the finish line I thanked God and cried. The last thing I wanted to do was finish in 14:00:01, which does not count. God is Good, All the Time!

RUN WHEN YOU CAN. WALK WHEN YOU CAN'T. RELENTLESS FORWARD PROGRESS.

Submitted by Erin Karara



The turn of the year often seems like a natural time to reflect on the past, present and future. So naturally, the best way I could think of to reflect was by signing up for a 100-mile, 24 hour race. The goal was simple. Run as many laps as you could on a .9913 mile loop through a municipal park on New Year's Eve. Monotonous? Quite. Crazy? A bit. Challenging? You betcha! If I had to do it all over again, would I? Absolutely.

2020 brought us all a lot of challenges. Things that we never could have even fathomed possible – a pandemic that forced us to stay physically distant from friends and loved ones, figuring out new ways to work, live, and play, and determining how we would stay mentally intact through it all. So an interesting juxtaposition, at least in my mind, was the idea of completing this outlandish race when the opportunity presented itself in early November.

I have had the goal of completing a 100-mile race on my own personal bucket list for quite some time now. My journey into ultras started in 2015 with a 50 mile race that my mother assured me I would have no problem completing since 'I was doing a marathon anyways' that fall just a few weeks prior. I emerged from that first experience battered and [literally] bruised, recognizing my own naivety in my decision to train on primarily roads instead of trails leading up to it. Each race, ultra or not, I have consciously tried to learn something from and take away a new lesson. If you asked me a year ago, would 2020 be the year for the 100, I would most certainly have said no way. There were just too many other priorities in my life at this point, and the 100 would still be there Someday.

However, priorities change, and fueled by a pandemic that literally changed all aspects of our lives, I found myself almost *needing* to check this one off the list sooner rather than later once I learned this in-person race was actually happening with a very small field of participants. One of the really attractive things about this race to me was the fact it was on a flat, paved trail and I wouldn't have to worry about facing crazy climbs through mountains or tripping over branches (note the bruises mentioned above from my first ultra). Completing 101 of the exact same loop to reach that goal? Now that would certainly prove to be a new mental challenge.

On the actual day of the race, New Year's Eve, I woke up early around 4:30am to make the trek up to New Jersey with my husband. Lucky for me, I had someone to drive and took advantage of being able to shut my eyes and rest both mentally and physically on the way up. We arrived at the Hainesport Municipal Park around 8am, and packet pickup was a breeze (although this was the first time I had to get my temperature taken along with grabbing the required race bib). Each participant was allowed a 10'x10' area along the start/finish of the race course to set up their own 'camp' or station. Most of the people, myself included, opted for a tent – which turned out to be a good way to provide us with a bit of respite from the elements we would experience during the race.

The race started at 9am sharp, and we were off for our first lap in some light rain. The small field quickly spread out and everyone tried to settle into their own pace. Among the front runners was a guy named Steve who was attempting to qualify for the National 24-hour team (he would need to run 154 miles in 24 hours to do this). I had the pleasure of settling into a couple laps and some good conversation for Steve with a bit, and was impressed with his consistency in pacing. In ultras though, anything can happen – and eventually Steve fell off of his goal pace and called it a day after completing 75 miles in 12 hours—a truly solid effort. I would later learn that Steve's original crew had car trouble and he was racing without his original crew, something that made me admire the effort that much more.

I had mapped out a plan before the race, and after thinking a bit about pacing and competing in the Backyard Quarantine race in July, I decided my approach would include intentional rest at various points while still maintaining an hourly mileage goal. This mileage goal would vary based on the hour and how far we were into the race. For example, the first 5 hours my plan was to complete 6 miles per hour. I wasn't so much worried about the pace per mile, just completing the 6 miles within that hour. Whatever was left of the hour would be rest time. This allowed me anywhere from 5-12 minutes to refuel, grab water or snacks to take with me, add or remove clothing, or simply get off my feet. In July's backyard quarantine, the race format required us to run 4.167 miles on the hour, every hour and whatever time was left was for you to decide what to do with. From that experience, I felt the 'forced rest' every hour kept me strong and fresh for the first few hours, but it got more challenging the longer you got into the race. For example, after 12 hours of doing that, it was *really* hard to get back up if you were sitting down. So my plan built in the rest for the first few hours, and then later in the race when I knew naturally I would slow a bit, the rest would typically be a walk break vs. a full-on stop.



This plan worked pretty well and I recall stopping at the aid station [finally] for the first time at 30 miles. One of the volunteers commented to me about how he kept seeing me go by and I hadn't stopped yet – he even told me he was worried I didn't like him. I told him about my plan at that

point, realizing I was right on target for 30 miles in 5 hours. I allowed myself to check in with how I was feeling and started to go hour by hour deciding on mileage goals – I had a rough idea mapped out previously, but the weather also necessitated some adjustments. As the sun went down, it started to get cold. Really cold. After midnight it dipped below about 27 degrees, and that's when I really started to feel it, my eyelashes even getting little icicles on them.

I made it to 50 miles in a new PR time (yay!) of 8:48 but soon after the nausea started to set in. This meant it was time for some ginger ale! I had been running primarily self-supported at this point, with the exception of a couple stops at the aid station, as my crew of 1 (read: a very understanding husband) had actually left a few minutes before race start to visit a facility a couple hours north for work. I figured he would be back at any point to check in on me, but after 50 miles I would chuckle to myself with each lap I racked up, thinking to myself, 'Hmm, I wonder how many miles I can run during one of his work days'. He did eventually show up somewhere between 50 and 60 miles, with a peppermint mocha latte and some buffalo macaroni and cheese. I was thankful to see him but there was no way I was going to be able to stomach the buffalo macaroni and cheese (which he was sure I was going to be impressed with, haha) and the coffee I even had an internal struggle with (it was getting cold and dark, and I thought a warm jolt of caffeine may help, but the nausea was still surfacing). Ultimately I decided a walk break with the coffee was the way to go, and chased it with some ginger ale.

Apparently the coffee with a ginger ale chaser was the way to go at this point, because shortly after I got my groove back, settling back into a nice running pace which also helped keep me warm. I ran into another participant on the course named Ben, a college senior from PA who recently got into ultrarunning. As Ben and I swapped stories, we realized I was actually 5 laps ahead of him and he refused to let me lap him again, matching me pace for pace. He thought I was funny because I seemed to have two speeds – on and off. We stuck together for about 20 miles, pushing each other and he even was willing to 'try it my way,' which was running at a fair clip for about 4 miles and walking for 1, in order to not be lapped. We were nearing somewhere around 70 miles and would pass the start/finish knocking out another 9:30 mile with wild cheers from our aid station volunteers who at one point referred to us as 'The Dream Team.' After a little while of this, we took a break and got warmer clothes, and went with Ben's method of slow and steady, chugging along at a relaxed 11:30 pace. We eventually did get separated when one of us needed a bathroom break and the other kept going. Ben and I both had some pretty big struggles further in – his resulting in a lot of duct taping his foot and me nearly giving up around mile 97.

As I got past 80 miles and then 85, it started to seem like the 100 miles was finally within reach. Just keep moving forward. This is when the mantra 'Run when you can, walk when you can't' really started to come in handy. I'd push myself to run a couple miles, then walk a mile, then switch back to running. It was too cold to stop at this point, so the only option was to keep moving forward. I had sent my husband back to the hotel around 11 to get a few hours of sleep, and I remember updating him somewhere around 3am that he could probably take an extra hour or so that our original plan of 4am. As I got nearer to the 100-mile mark, it started to get even colder. When my husband did show up somewhere between 4 and 5am I was definitely not in a good spot, and he encouraged me to take a break to get warm in the car. That was just about the end of me, just shy of 97 miles. At this point, my previous lap was horrific—having walked the entire thing and feeling dizzy, I really wasn't sure if I could complete it, even being that close. The car was so warm and I had wrapped myself in a blanket. I also wasn't sure if I could physically get up out of the seat of the car to continue, and both

my ankle joints and knee joints felt like they had been ground down and there was so much force on them when trying to bend.

I ended up staying in that car for about an hour. Dizzy, nauseated, exhausted, beat up. I felt terrible this was how my husband was spending New Year's, and at that point I told him I just wanted it to end and we should go back to the hotel. I also told him he would need to let the race director know if I was stopping, so they weren't out looking for me, so he walked over. I knew I was close, but I really thought this was just maybe not my day. When my husband came back after talking to the race director, he relayed the message he got from her, which was no, she absolutely cannot stop now, she's too close. And he told me that I had to go over and tell her myself I was stopping. I mustered whatever strength was left, fully intending to walk over and quit this race in exchange for a warm hotel bed and shower. When I got over there, however, the race director told me no way I was stopping now, I would regret it too much (she was right, I would have), said you just gotta 'slog it out' and keep going, only 3 more miles and I was so far ahead of the 24 hour mark already. She made sure I had an extra warm coat, I grabbed a hot beverage and set out determined to walk as far as I could (at whatever pace it was), just keep going forward, until I got to hopefully 100 miles.

Luckily I made it – it wasn't pretty towards the end, and it nearly didn't happen which is crazy to think about now. But in the end, forward progress is what got me there. It also taught me that even when you literally think you have *nothing* left, you likely still do have something. I'm so thankful to all of those that supported me during this journey (both in training and during the race) and all the positive vibes and messages sent to me before and during (you know who you are!) and the awesome race director who taught me I could keep moving forward. I now have a fancy buckle to show for it, and dinner plans at 'some fancy restaurant' for NYE 2021 (because there's no way I can put my husband through that NYE experience two years in a row!).

RUNNING IN UAE DURING A PANDEMIC

Submitted by Larry Stern



March 23rd was just another normal running day in the life of Larry living in Dubai. I reviewed my log for this article from that day and it said: “Nice temps and breeze with little to no humidity. Lovely run with the exception of the stomach issue at the beginning.” Stomach issues were the least of my problems as this was the beginning of the end of my running life in Dubai pre-pandemic. At first you were allowed to exercise outdoors but you were encouraged to stay home.

Log from March 24th: “The authorities said to stay at home but I'm pretty sure it was illegal NOT to run in this weather this morning.” This was followed by restrictions as to when you got to go outside during the pandemic. Outdoor activities were now limited and could not start before 6 a.m. I had to contact the Dubai police for clarification as per my log of April 1: “...able to run outside after getting clarification from the Dubai Police. I did break the law by 2 minutes” – starting at 5:58am.

As things slowly got worse, so did the rules. In early April all outdoor activities were no longer allowed. There were strict penalties for being outdoors, so I was unable to run until. We discovered the outdoor track in our building. Log April 13: "After a week and a half (no outdoor running) we figured out the track on the 4th floor was open. I guess we shall see how many circles I can run". The track was just over 1/10 of a mile. Lots of small circles to get only 1 mile. It got to the point after a certain number of times around, I would need to turn and go the other direction to balance out my equilibrium. This circle running let me figure out some things about myself that I never knew.

Apparently, I am a clockwise runner since I didn't get dizzy running that direction. I confirmed this fact the next day as my log April 17 says, "definitely a clockwise runner." Now we were at the point where we were told we had to wear a mask while on the track. I made it a single mile on April 19th. "Tired of running with a mask in circles." Then came April 25th. We were permitted to run outdoors now but we had to wear a mask which did not go over too well. "Can finally run outdoors again but had to wear a mask. Hated it!" By this time, I was ready to go off the deep end. I was not able to run.

What to do? I finally made the difficult decision, that if I wanted to survive in this world, I needed to get a treadmill. I actually got excited (or as excited as someone can get) for just purchasing a treadmill. And then TOTAL LOCK DOWN! No one was allowed outdoors at all except for emergencies. Can you believe that the delivery of my treadmill did not qualify as an emergency? What's wrong with this country? The only reason you could go outdoors was to go to doctors' appointments, the pharmacy, or the grocery store. And don't think you could just pick up and go. You had to apply online with the Dubai Police Department for a permit that would give you two hours to complete your task. All speed cameras (and there are plenty in the UAE) were set to "zero" miles per hour, so they were taking pictures of every car that passed. If you did not have permission to be out, you were fined and it wasn't cheap.

This brings us to May 7th. Nearly two weeks of no running. And I wasn't about to start doing some of the goofy "at home" exercise programs that were being promoted. I'm a runner...I run!

The delivery of the treadmill. I'm pretty sure I was more excited about this than the birth of my own children and I would probably be tortured just the same. Now I had a treadmill and was able to run but how was I going to survive life on a treadmill. This was the beginning of my 100-day running streak. Obviously, not all on the treadmill as this would have caused me to spontaneously combust, but there were many days of the treadmill running during this time. I could write about what I was putting in my logs at this time, but I must have been pissed I was running on the treadmill as there were absolutely no comments...not a single one. It got so bad that a friend of mine posted on a run "I feel like you can be more descriptive in these posts." It was known how miserable I was, but I kept going just to stay sane. I actually joined one of those silly virtual running challenges to keep myself inspired. I was now running across the State of New York. That's right. This is what it has come to. Running on a treadmill while pretending I was running across the State of New York. And I actually paid money for this insanity.

From May 7th to July 4th, I ran every freaking day on the treadmill. It was after this time I was able to return to the U.S. and run outdoors. And let me tell you, running on a treadmill does not train you for running outdoors. But at the same time, there is nothing better than the warm humid air of the Maryland summer to get the blood pumping.

YOUTH PROGRAM UPDATE

Submitted by Coach Phil Lang



Our youth program earned 2 more age group team honors at this years AAU XC Junior Olympic National Championships. The meet in Tallahassee, FL on December 5, 2020 was the biggest and most competitive National Championships we have seen. The lack of opportunity this Fall across the country led to so many of those committed athletes who trained so hard under these unique circumstances to enter this years meet.

The meet started with last years Foot Locker National High School Champion and current University of Stanford Freshman, Zofia Dudek, setting a course record of 16:16 and winning the 15-18 year old women's division 5k. Our only woman in the 15-18 race, Rachel Roberts from Marriotts Ridge, finished in 21:03 and 52nd in her age group.

We had 2 teams in the 15-18 men's division 5k. The A team placed 2nd, losing to a team from Colorado. Two of the guys earned All-American status in their age groups, Baidy Ba from Oakland Mills running 15:30 placing 4th overall and was the 3rd 17-18 and Joey Raudabaugh from Howard running 15:43 placing 8th overall and was the 2nd 15-16. Aiden Neal from Manchester Valley also broke 16 minutes, 15:53, and placed 13th, Kendall Phillips from Howard ran 16:09 placing 34th, Jacob Hauf from Mt Hebron ran 16:35 and placed 68th, Jakob Werdell from Howard finished in 16:43 placing 75th, Max Crockett from Marriotts Ridge ran 16:55 and finished 104th and Eian Butler from Howard finished in 17:30 and 166th place. The B team placed 22nd out of 35 teams. Ethan Aidam from Oakland Mills ran 16:53 for 100th place, Dylan Jock from Glenelg ran 17:32 for 171st, Zach Shord from Atholton finished in 17:45 and 187th place, Robert King from River Hill ran 17:47 and was 191st, Gavin LeBrun from Marriotts Ridge ran 18:47 and was 278th, Chris Mann from Howard finished in 18:56 and 290th place and Jake Hayden from Mt Hebron ran 20:58 and was 370th.

Our 13-14 boys representative in the 4k was Owen Conklin and he finished in 16:14 and 217th place.

The 13-14 girls team earned the programs second honor of the day by placing 3rd out of 17 teams. All of these girls have been a part of the program and have teamed up to place 1st twice before and 3rd last year. Robin and Wren Kucler earned All-American status and led the way in the 4k race with a 13:51 17th overall and 6th place age group and 14:05 23rd overall and 8th place age group, respectively. Frankie Moore from Oakland Mills and Kiley Mann from Howard finished back to back in 14:45 and 14:46 for 49th and 50th. Gabrielle Shord finished in 15:10 for 71st.

Claire Sivitz ran the 11-12 girls 3k and finished in 12:27 and 117th place.

Maren Lee ran the 9-10 girls 3k and finished in 14:25 and 118th place.

Nate Cramer and Tyler Sivitz ran the 9-10 boys 3k and finished in 13:35 and 14:42 for 109th and 122nd, respectively.

Brian Sivitz, Mark Gilmore and Phil Lang ran the coaches 3k and finished 1st, 2nd and 6th, respectively.

The day ended with Brian Shadrick and Tim Jock running in the open 5k and placed 2nd and 5th in their age groups, respectively.

There are meets each Sunday in either Frederick or Montgomery County and many of the kids have taken advantage of the opportunities to compete. A lot of rules and different plans went into place to get approvals from the parks to hold these events. No more race day registration, only pre-registration is allowed to ensure the meet directors know exactly how many people are coming and when. No course walks before the event and no tents as spending a lot of time at the meet is not allowed. The starting times for each age group is specific and followed so the meet schedule for each meet allows parents and kids to show just before their event and then they are asked to leave shortly after they are done to keep the crowd size to a minimum. Chip and fully automated timing (FAT), typically used at track meets, is being used so that the athletes can finish and do not need stickers or tear tags pulled from their shirt. Masks are being worn when not running and social distancing is being done throughout the park. The events are taking much longer than in the past as there is time between age group races so people can leave before others show up. This seems to be the only way at this point and being flexible and doing things a bit different in 2020 is something we have all come to understand.

Some of us plan to travel to Tallahassee for the AAU Junior Olympic XC National Championships on December 5 and the highlights of the regular season competitions and the National meet will be shared in the next newsletter!



VIRTUAL AND LIVE RACE RESULTS

Submitted by Greg Lepore

If there are races that you are running and would like to share your time, or if your name is missing or time is inaccurate, let us know by emailing newsletter@striders.net Way to go, Striders!

AFCEA 5k Virtual October 2020	
Michael Davies	19:35
Frank Bahus	20:04
Tammy Liu	22:07
Jason Mielke	22:43
Harry Rowell	23:52
Wendy Turner	24:17
Quana Frost	24:48
Kevin Yant	25:55
Andy Doyle	28:25
Amelia Mullican	28:35
Elliott Chamberlin-Long	37:58

Germantown 5-miler Boys, MD October 17, 2020	
John Way	36:42
Eugene Myers	37:35
Alyssa Mitchell	45:51
Eric Johnston	46:17
Michelle Melencio	54:18
Helene Myers	1:09:17

Terry Burk and Sam Case 5k Westminster, MD November 7, 2020	
John Way	20:14
Samantha Merkel	20:29
Bill Brown	23:12
Marsha Demaree	24:04
Jeanette A Novak	44:20

Stone Mill 50-miler MoCo, MD November 14, 2020	
Aaron Ellison	8:31:08
Keith Levasseur	8:53:30
Mikhail Petrovskikh	10:21:26
Henry Peck	10:38:45
Michael Gelinias	11:46:09
Xuesong Wang	11:50:16
Wade Gaasch	13:45:24

Rosaryville 50k Rosaryville, MD November 14, 2020	
Faye Weaver	6:34:20
Jill May	6:34:30
Michelle Pelszynski	6:34:32
David Hopkins	7:03:23
Carol Wesolowski	8:11:22

WELCOME 14 NEW MEMBERS SINCE 10/1/2020

Submitted by Lynda Allera, membership@striders.net

Afroza Bally	Akifa Kanta	Mike Tanner
Cristina Green	MD Abdullahel Karim	Ellie Tanner
Patrick Green	Rina Moss	Joey Tanner
Mohd Ishtiaque Hossain	Meherun Nessa	Leah Williams
Mohammad Ibrahim Hossain	Joanna Tanner	

If your Strider membership is up, please visit the Striders website to renew! We are hopeful for more events in 2021 and we want to make sure you are aware of them and receive the appropriate discount to those that offer that option.

WE OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Submitted by Phil Lang

It DOES take a village! We hope to see your name added to this Wall of Gratitude in the next issue!

We recognize that not all volunteers listed below are Strider members but we love you nonetheless! And if we inadvertently missed you in this issue, please [let us know!](#)

	Youth Program	FOOTPRINTS		Youth Program	FOOTPRINTS
Lynda Allera		♥	Pattie Laun		♥
Rene Alonso		♥	Greg Lepore		♥
Amanda Beal	♥		Amanda Loudin		♥
Bill Brown		♥	Tammy Lui Hermstein	♥	
Conor Croft	♥		Mack McLain	♥	
Zack Dickerson	♥		Brian Murphy	♥	
Mark Gilmore	♥		Greg Orlofsky	♥	
Jeff Heiges	♥		Phil Rogers	♥	
Nick Kohout	♥		Brian Shadrick	♥	
Phil Lang	♥	♥	Brian Sivitz	♥	
Vicki Lang	♥		John Steiner	♥	

BOARD BLATHER

Submitted by Bill Brown, secretary@striders.net



The HCS Board meets once a month to discuss club business. What exactly is club business? The newsletter's latest addition, Board Blather, is a quarterly recap intended to answer that very question.

2020—Fourth Quarter

The pandemic continues as does the work of your Board of Directors. The highlight of this quarter was the Run Through the Grapevine Race. Race Director Hafiz Shaikh did an excellent job putting together a safe and socially-distanced race. We had over 200 people in attendance, including volunteers. Participants followed the rules and we received a number of compliments. Bullseye did an excellent job scoring and we appreciate the hard work of Volunteer Coordinator Pattie Laun. The other item of business which occupied our meetings was preparing the budget and slate of officers for 2021. We will report the results following our virtual Membership Meeting.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Cecilia Murach, president@striders.net



Dear Striders,

I hope you all had a good holiday season with some cheer, despite the pandemic! I personally really missed being able to gather as a club for the Annual Banquet, celebrate running achievements and share a delicious meal together. Especially this year, on the 45th Anniversary of the Howard County Striders!

I want to take a moment to thank you for your diligence in following the public health guidelines. I am so proud to be President of a club that cares so much for our community, and each other. Thank you for respecting and understanding the hard decisions we were faced with in 2020. Unfortunately, 2021 hasn't brought about many changes yet, but I am hopeful that as the year progresses we will be able to reopen club activities a little more. The fact that we can hold a small training program, with safety protocols in place, definitely gives me hope! Thank you to the coaches who made this possible and to the participants who have been eagerly joining the sessions, and faithfully abiding by the guidelines!

I want to also take some time to thank three very important Board Members who are retiring from the Board of Directors, and without whom the business of our club would not have been possible in the last several years. First, a huge thank you to Bill Arbelaez, who (in his last iteration on the Board) served as Vice President during 2019 and 2020. Bill has probably served in every role on the Board over the many years he has devoted to the Striders. His knowledge of the club, and his kind demeanor, was a steadying force for me, particularly this year. We owe Bill a huge debt of gratitude for his humble dedication. Second, Carrie Anderson, our 2019-2020 Treasurer, is also leaving the Board. Carrie has put in countless hours in service of the club, has been instrumental in helping the

Board understand and manage our finances wisely. Carrie truly made a very hard job look easy and will be hard to replace! Last, but most certainly not least, is Lynda Allera, who is leaving the role of Membership Director. Lynda's love for the club, and advocacy for the membership, has been tremendous. I want to especially thank Lynda for bringing a fresh perspective on topics being discussed by the Board! We will miss you.

I'd like to end by encouraging everyone to stay safe and healthy. Even though we cannot run the Club Challenge this February, let's do our best to stay healthy and safe, to make sure we can get back to racing this Fall. Here's to hoping we can meet to celebrate a return to running together soon! Let's continue to respect one another and support each other in these challenging times. I look forward to the day when we can celebrate our club's 45th anniversary together in person!

Stay healthy and run strong,
Cecilia Murach, President
Howard County Striders

2021 STRIDERS LEADERSHIP Board of Directors



2021 Board: Cecilia Murach (President), Bill Brown (Vice President), Pattie Laun (Secretary and Acting Treasurer), Caroline Bauer and Mark Buschman (Racing Team), Clarese Astrin (Social), Melinda Krummerich (Weekly Series), Hafiz Shaikh (Special Races), Rene Alonso (Communications), Rachel Sanborn (Special Programs), Greg Orlofsky (Youth Programs & Junior Striders).

Vacant: Membership & Volunteering, Treasurer